

**HOPE VALLEY/WYOMING FIRE DISTRICT
996 MAIN STREET
HOPE VALLEY, RI 02832**

**MONTHLY BOARD MEETING
NOVEMBER 12, 2015
7:00 P.M.**

Those present: Board Members: Chairperson, Pasquale DeBernardo, Vice-Chairperson, Elwood Johnson, Georgia Ure, Paul Schaarschmidt, John Weeden; Chief, Justin Lee; Treasurer, Deborah Nicotra; Tax Collector, Sue Bok; District Clerk, Julie Kelley

Those not present: All in Attendance this evening.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting commenced and was called to order by Chairperson, Pasquale DeBernardo at 7:00 p.m. with a salute to the flag and a moment of silence.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The Open Session minutes of the October 8th Monthly Board Meeting were presented. Mr. Johnson motioned to accept the minutes as presented and Mr. Weeden and Mr. Schaarschmidt seconded the motion. With no further discussion, all in favor, all aye, motion passed unanimously (5-0).

Mr. DeBernardo-yes; Mr. Johnson-yes; Ms. Ure-yes; Mr. Schaarschmidt-yes; Mr. Weeden-yes

3. TAX COLLECTOR'S REPORT – COLLECTED AND OUTSTANDING TAXES

The Tax Collector's report was presented for October 2015 reflecting all collected and outstanding taxes. Ms. Bok reported that as of today, the district has collected \$667,658.35 to date. Mr. Johnson motioned to accept the Tax Collector's Report as presented and Ms. Ure and Mr. Weeden seconded the motion. Discussion: Chief Lee and Chairperson DeBernardo recently consolidated the loans, which were reviewed and approved by the District's attorney. At that time, Chairperson DeBernardo inquired about gathering the information for our next Tax Sale. Mr. Panciera stated that his staff had been reduced and could not confirm that he would be able to perform the tax sale. Mr. Panciera suggested that we might hire Mr. Michael Lenihan or hire a firm to do this, as there would be no additional cost to the district as the cost is built into the back taxes. Chairperson DeBernardo will follow-up and contact Mr. Michael Lenihan. With no further discussion, all in favor, all aye, motion passed unanimously (5-0).

Mr. DeBernardo-yes; Mr. Johnson-yes; Ms. Ure-yes; Mr. Schaarschmidt-yes; Mr. Weeden-yes

4. TREASURER'S REPORT – MONTHLY BILLS & EXPENDITURES

A motion was made by Mr. Johnson to take the Treasurer's Report for September 2015 that was to be presented at the October meeting off the table for further review this evening, and Ms. Ure seconded the motion. Discussion: Ms. Nicotra stated that nothing new was outstanding other than software issues, as the Reserve account is still not calculating correctly. With no further discussion, all in favor, all aye, motion passed unanimously (5-0).

Mr. DeBernardo-yes; Mr. Johnson-yes; Ms. Ure-yes; Mr. Schaarschmidt-yes; Mr. Weeden-yes

Mr. Johnson motioned to accept the September Treasurer's Report as presented and Mr. Weeden seconded the motion. With no further discussion, all in favor, all aye, motion passed unanimously (5-0).

Mr. DeBernardo-yes; Mr. Johnson-yes; Ms. Ure-yes; Mr. Schaarschmidt-yes; Mr. Weeden-yes

The Treasurer's Report was presented for October 2015. The board inquired about Acct. # 4210 – Custodian Services & Support, regarding a bill from RPE Waste Services. It was discussed that currently the district has no contract with them. The board would like to see other quotes to ensure best pricing. Chief Lee will look into obtaining quotes from other vendors for comparable pricing.

Mr. Johnson motioned to accept the October Treasurer's Report as presented and Ms. Ure seconded the motion. Discussion: Chairperson DeBernardo inquired about obtaining a signature card for Mr. Johnson for the accounts. Ms. Nicotra will follow-up to ensure this is accomplished.

The audit consultant is requesting that any compensation points are broken out. He would like to see that the liability is paid out for one fiscal year.

Chief Lee recently spoke with TIA CREF; they will be running the numbers on periods for Captain David Dumsar and Retired Chief Fred Stanley from July 2012. They still need to inform us of what they should of paid into that account and provide to us a Lost Earnings Report in order for David and Fred to be in current standings. At this time, we have no idea of what the amount might be, but an estimated amount for Retired Chief Fred Stanley, could possibly be up to \$6,000.00. With no further discussion, all in favor, all aye, motion passed unanimously (5-0).

Mr. DeBernardo-yes; Mr. Johnson-yes; Ms. Ure-yes; Mr. Schaarschmidt-yes; Mr. Weeden-yes

5. DISCUSS AND POSSIBLE APPOINT/SWEAR IN TWO NEW LIEUTENANTS FOR THE FIRE DISTRICT

The Board of Engineers met with two (2) candidates and they recommended for promotion Mr. Carlos Cotto and Mr. Joshua Dumas to the positions of Lieutenant. The board accepted these recommendations. These positions are based on a probationary period of six (6) months. Chief Lee stated that they would report each week and each Lieutenant would be assigned a mentor to help them in their new position. There were three (3) people on the list, but one was not recommended because he did not meet our active firefighter guidelines over the past year. We will start the testing process shortly to fill the third position.

The District Clerk, Julie Kelley, swore in the newly appointed Lieutenants, Mr. Carlos Cotto, and Mr. Joshua Dumas. Their family members had the honor of pinning the badge on each of the newly appointed Lieutenants. Everyone in attendance congratulated the Lieutenants.

6. CHIEF'S REPORT – EQUIPMENT, BUILDING, SEMINARS

Chief Justin W. Lee's monthly report was presented for October 2015.

Incidents

There was a structure fire at 4 North Switch Road with flames in the rear of the building. The fire was started by electric baseboard heat. Carolina and Ashaway fire departments helped with manpower. Deputy Champlin was also on scene with Chief Lee. One firefighter was injured on the scene; Patrick Drummond who was hurt with second-degree burns and was then sent to the Westerly Hospital, he is doing well now. Chairperson DeBernardo informed the board that he called Mr. Drummond. He felt it would be a good procedure to have at least one board member be in touch with our Fire Fighters. He felt this was important and something he would like to continue with in the future. All board members were in agreement that they should be aware and be knowledgeable of situations like this.

Chief Lee and Deputy Jason Caswell are currently still working with the Dawson Group to try and see how it all works. We are hoping to begin this by month end or early December.

Equipment/Vehicle Maintenance

Engine 915 went in for Inspection after getting new springs and rear brakes. There are two (2) trucks left ready for inspection, which will go in next week. With our next bill we will be approximately \$1,500.00 over on our Maintenance account. However, under our Insurance account we will be \$3,500.00 less.

Chief Lee reviewed the District's recent heating oil usage; it looks like we will have a savings of 285 gallons this year.

Engine 913 had another electrical issue; it will be going for repair once again next week. Our primary concern is to have equipment that works effectively for the safety of our members and the citizens within our community.

A hydrant in our community was recently hit and damaged. The cost to repair the hydrant is the District's responsibility. Financially, we are ahead as our district does not pay rent on the hydrants, as do many other communities. We have an agreement with the town to maintain the hydrants, flush them etc. in exchange for no rental fees.

The new Chief's vehicle has been lettered at a cost of \$200.00 or less.

Social Media and Photography Policy

Within the packets for the board to review were the Social Media and Photography Standard Operating Guidelines (SOG's). Chief Lee informed the board that he based these on the International Fire SOG's. These guidelines are necessary to protect the District and to protect the patients that we assist.

Loans

The loan consolidation with Dime Bank is completed and will begin starting July 1, 2016. Automatic payments will be taken out of our account on a monthly basis. The bank fees were waived for the closing costs.

Retirement System

For the MERS Retirement system, it will cost the district \$3,500.00 to do the study to switch Chief Lee and Captain Dumsar into the Public Program. We are still currently gathering information on this. There are new regulations coming down on this. There will be an annual actuary study on all retirement of which will be included in the Audit Reporting. In order to help understand these new regulations, there will be classes for both the Treasurer and for the Auditors to attend in order to learn these new procedures.

Verizon Tower

There has been a delay in the start of construction based on the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) comments. Once the SHPO is cleared, construction can commence.

Building Maintenance/Park

The board felt it was a nice touch for the District to hand out candy on Halloween. The parade at the Hope Valley Elementary School was quite a success. Mr. Johnson commented that he and his grandchildren attended and they personally can attest that they all had a very good time at this event.

The park has been winterized for the season.

Firefighter Phil Burdick cleaned all the carpets in the station at very minimal cost to the district. Firefighter Dave Richardson also assisted him in cleaning the carpets. The board recognized the great job done by both firefighters.

Access to Public Records Act

There was a request for public information by Mrs. Lafortune at RIfreedom.org. Chief Lee submitted the information she requested and a copy of the request is to be retained on file.

Personnel

Ms. Bok will be taking on the responsibility of recording inventory updates and maintenance repairs. There have been new forms made up and once completed the form is turned in where it is then recorded (add/removal). Ms. Bok will also have maintenance slips for each piece of apparatus to help keep better maintenance records.

Mr. Johnson motioned to accept the Chief's report for October 2015 and Mr. Schaarschmidt seconded the motion. With no further discussion, all in favor, all aye, motioned passed unanimously (5-0).

Mr. DeBernardo-yes; Mr. Johnson-yes; Ms. Ure-yes; Mr. Schaarschmidt-yes; Mr. Weeden-yes

7. CORRESPONDENCE – INCOMING & OUTGOING

Incoming:

1. Letter addressed to Mr. Justin Lee, Chief, Hope Valley/Wyoming Fire District, from The Schartners, Schartner Farms, expressing their appreciation for the Fire Departments assistance during the compost fire.
2. Letter addressed to Ms. Janet Coit, DEM Director, from The Schartners, Schartner Farms, regarding Compost Fire at Schartner Corner Nursery.
3. Email addressed to Mr. Justin Lee, Chief, Hope Valley/Wyoming Fire District, from Marissa Marandola, requesting information under the Access to Public Records Act.
4. Email addressed to Mr. Justin Lee, Chief, Hope Valley/Wyoming Fire District, from Mr. Andrew Pearsall, Vital Site Services, Inc., regarding Verizon Wireless/SHPO Status.

Outgoing:

1. Letter from Ms. Julie Kelley, District Clerk and Mr. Pasquale F. DeBernardo, Chairperson, Hope Valley/Wyoming Fire District, addressed to Ms. Elizabeth D'Amato, Dime Bank, regarding New Chairs and authorization to execute the Hope Valley/Wyoming Fire District Auto Loan and Loan consolidation.
2. Letter from Mr. Justin Lee, Chief, Hope Valley/Wyoming Fire District, addressed to Hazmat Team Members, expressing appreciation for firefighters completing their annual refresher class.
3. Email from Mr. Justin Lee, Chief, Hope Valley/Wyoming Fire District, addressed to Ms. Marissa Marandola, in response to her recent request for Public Information.

8. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

New Ladder Truck

The first meeting was held this evening at 6:00 p.m. The Chair of the committee is Chief Lee. At this time, they are discussing the District's future goals for a new ladder truck. The discussions will include what they liked about the old truck and what they would like to see in the new truck. The committee would also like to look at other companies other than just one sole source. We will create specs/requirements and then will have bidders bid based

on our requests. It will not be a proprietary bid; it will be generic to enable other companies to participate in the bid process. The next meeting is to be held on December 10th at 6:00 p.m.

9. APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES

Chairperson DeBernardo would like to appoint a committee after the 1st of the year to take a look at the Charter and change some things that may need to be changed. The board would like to include three or four people within the community to become members of the committee.

10. OLD BUSINESS

We need to review the contract for the Park for Mowing. It was discussed that we might want to have the lawn mowed in-house again for additional cost savings to the District.

11. NEW BUSINESS

No new business came before the board.

12. PUBLIC FORUM

Deputy David Caswell announced to all in attendance that Reverend Wallace would like to have a Community Tree Lighting at Depot Square Park along with Christmas caroling and refreshments served for the community. The tree lighting ceremony is scheduled for Sunday, November 29th at 5:00 p.m.

13. OTHER BUSINESS

The board's thoughts go out to Pastor Wallace's wife while she undergoes her first treatment for Lung cancer. Chief Lee has sent a note on behalf of the District.

14. EXECUTIVE SESSION UNDER RI GENERAL LAWS §42-46-5 (a)(1)-(10)

No Executive Session this evening.

15. ADJOURN

A motion was made to adjourn at 8:02 p.m. by Mr. Johnson and seconded by Mr. Schaarschmidt. With no further discussion, all in favor, all aye, motion passed unanimously (5-0).

Mr. DeBernardo-yes; Mr. Johnson-yes; Ms. Ure-yes; Mr. Schaarschmidt-yes; Mr. Weeden-yes

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Kelley
District Clerk